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The Center of Civil Law Studies

5-1-2008

No.7 - May 2008

Center of Civil Law Studies

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Recommended Citation

Center of Civil Law Studies, "No.7 - May 2008" (2008). *The Center of Civil Law Studies Newsletter*. 7.
<http://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/cclsnews/7>

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The Russell Long Chair and CCLS Newsletter

May 2008 - #7

DIGEST ONLINE

www.law.lsu.edu/digest

The *Digest of the Civil Laws now in Force in the Territory of Orleans* was enacted on March 31, 1808. It is now made accessible online, on occasion of the Bicentennial of what is often described as the first Louisiana civil code. The original French and the English translation can be viewed separately or together on the same screen. The typing of both versions was extracted from the first edition of 1808, printed by Bradford & Anderson, in the city of New Orleans. With the exception of obvious typos, the Digest Online strictly follows the original wording and orthography.

In addition, the manuscript notes of 1814, attributed to Louis Moreau-Lislet who, with James Brown, drafted the Digest, are available on this website. These notes are extracted from the *De la Vergne Volume*, a copy of the Digest bound in 1808 with interleaves between the English text on the left and the French text on the right. The manuscript notes on the interleaves give reference mainly to Roman and Spanish laws, but also mention French sources, such as Domat and Pothier, as explained by Moreau-Lislet in the Foreword. This volume belonged to the de la Vergne family for generations, and is presently in possession of Mr. Louis V. de la Vergne. It was published by the LSU and Tulane law schools in 1968, and by Claitor's in 1971 and 2008. The right to reproduce the notes was generously provided to the CCLS by Mr. Louis V. de la Vergne. The notes also appear for the first time in typed version, making them easily readable.

The Digest Online is part of a larger project called **Civil Law Online**, a site created to support the efforts of the CCLS. It is intended to provide a single gathering place for resources for the study of the Civil Law of Louisiana and other jurisdictions. It is an extension of the Paul M. Hebert Law Center Law Library, which represents one of the most extensive collections in the United States of Civil Law materials.



RELATED PUBLICATIONS

A **Bicentennial Edition** of the Digest has been published by **Claitor's** publishing in Baton Rouge, (<http://www.claitors.com>). It is a facsimile of the the *De la Vergne Volume* (\$20).

Jacques Royal just published an illustrated *1808 – Louisiana Civil Code*, with a foreword by Olivier Moréteau (\$15). His art featuring the history of the Digest will be exhibited until December 2008 at the Acadian Cultural Center (Jean Lafitte) in Lafayette, after the March exhibition at the *State Archives* in Baton Rouge. Contact artbyroyal@centurytel.net